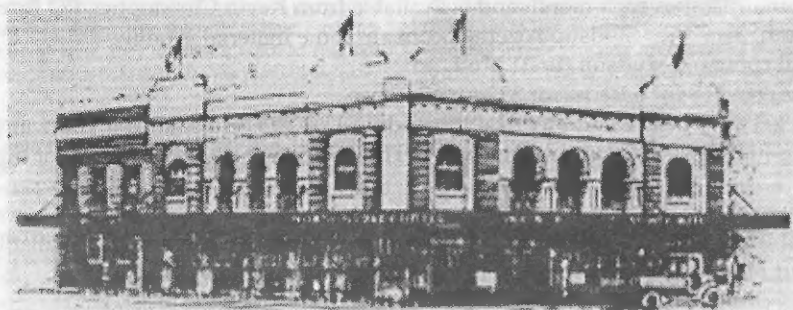


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## THREE POINTS AND A HANGOVER

The Original Northern Spirit Fanzine



Robbies just seen  
how long the beer queues are.

Issue 1

\$ 2



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We would have liked to have a letter page but as this is our first issue nobody knew to write to us.(hint hint)

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All I want is....

**THREE POINTS  
AND A HANGOVER**

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**NEXT ISSUE**

9th April v Adelaide Sharks

Submission deadline:  
Tuesday 30th March

# Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of what will hopefully become a regular feature at North Sydney oval (or wherever we end up playing). My aim with this venture is to provide an vehicle to air the views of fans for any issues, both on and off the pitch. I am confident that after reading through this volume your creative ideas might be sufficiently stimulated to allow some of you to contribute to the next issue and help produce an even better "Three points and a Hangover".

As we go to press Spirit have just come off the rails at home against Sydney United. After what can only be described as a stunning win at home over Marconi followed by collecting full points away at Olympic and home to Perth many felt we were almost guaranteed the points when Sydney United came to visit. What many forgot is despite their financial woes Sydney United are not only a team in form, but a team that has the potential to win game after game and their table position reflects this all to well.

The financial problems Sydney United are experiencing and symptomatic of the problems many clubs are facing throughout the league. Gippsland seem have turned to selling players just to stay solvent and both Adelaide City and Adelaide Sharks have suffered large drops in crowd numbers. Brisbane and Carlton, despite recent on field success have not seen the crowds follow while Melbourne Knights are in desperate need of the reported AUD \$900,000 they will receive from Celtic following Mark Viduka's transfer there. Closer to home Canberra, Wollongong and Newcastle are also struggling to attract crowds.

It will be an interesting time in the coming months as clubs, and the league address these problems. It seems certain Newcastle will be sold to an unnamed consortium, Carlton appears set to be sold and move, with a new name to a new ground and there is talk of a new team in Adelaide that would follow a similar business model used by Perth and Spirit. The entry of Auckland into the league will place further pressure on those clubs who cannot attract fans to either reform or they will fall behind over time. If all of these plans work at the end of next season the National league might have as many as six teams regularly attracting crowds of over 10,000, and what a big step that would be.

All this takes place as Basil Scarcella (Soccer Australia Chairman) tells anyone and everyone who will listen that clubs will no longer be kicked out of the league and that market forces will determine the makeup of the league of the future. He goes on to say that in the league of the future clubs will need to attract crowds of 10,000 - 12,000 to survive.

What we are all waiting for is the release of "Soccer 21" (and what a creative name that is) Due out at the Soccer Australia general meeting on February 28, it is a strategic plan for football for the next five years. If I can get my hands on a copy we will bring you a full report in the next issue. Perhaps it might also include plans to start calling this sport, and the governing body "football" in the near future.

It's interesting to see that away shirts were not available for sale this year. These blue shirts are a striking contrast to our white home strip and many people have said if they could buy them they would. I have heard the club can't get Reusch to supply them and Reusch says there is no market for them. At the Sydney United game our players warmed up in away shirts and now the new G3 Robbie Slater cardboard cutouts are in away shirts so is a change of mind happening at Reusch?

Perhaps the most annoying thing about this is at the United game a Spirit "fan" took great delight in standing in front of the Bob stand all night wearing one. When many people asked him where he got it from he said they were not available but as a friend of Martin Reusch he had one. Surly if Reusch can supply his friends (I presume for no charge) they surly he could supply the paying fans at North Sydney?

Tancred



# An Interview with Mark Goldberg

When we first heard Mark Goldberg would be spending a few weeks in Australia we thought great, heres our chance to get some answers to all the questions we have been dying to ask. After arraigning the interview for after the Newcastle game we arrived to find the only person who did not know about the interview was Mark Goldberg. We managed to grab him as he left for another engagement.

We though he would at least answer a few questions so we started with this:

**How much did you know about Australian Football before investing in Australian football before you decided to invest in the Northern Spirit?**

MG: I took the word of Terry Venables and Remo Nogarotto, we believe that football in this country was up and coming and we also had a vision that we could bring a lot of the infrastructure that we've brought to Crystal Palace FC along with sales and marketing initiatives we brought there and we could bring them to the industry here. We also believe that the catchment area was right and we believed in his vision for a non ethnic team that could generate support and average 10-15k supporters and their vision has become a reality and the backing I feel was well deserved. I really believe were can be an asset to the club in the future.

I think whats important is that what we bring to the club is not enough to attract the right sort of players to stay in Australia and possibly attract European players to come he, what we need further is a equivalent of the European Champions league. The top two Australian clubs need to be able to compete in years to come with the top two teams from the top six leagues in Asia. We are calling this the Asian Champions league and only when we have that up and running will we be able to generate sufficient revenues from TV and then from sponsorship and then from all the corporate people in order to reinvest into the football here and into the other football clubs in the league and only then will sponsorships follow and only then will we be able to attract the best players in Australia to stay in Australia and only then will we be able to attract the best players in Europe to want to come here. We believe the potential for the Asian Champions league will be is something that will be in demand as the European Champions league and I think that when we get FIFA on board the is a possibility of a four way play off between the winners of the European Champions League, the South American Champion league, the African Champions league and the Asian Champions league and have a trophy at the end. This could allow even more money to be invested into football.

There is no shortcut, we have to more this forward and we need as many people as possible believing in this and only then will we be able to generate the sort of money needed to keep the best players in this league and attract the crowds to stay.

With that he left for the previously mentioned engagement leaving us to ponder what else we might had been told if we could have asked him all our questions.

Tancred

# Johns point

LET'S GET THIS LEAGUE ORGANISED!

Put yourself in this following situation. You receive a phone call on the Monday before your clubs first organised away bus trip, and someone greets you with the news that the game for next week has been moved forward two hours.

Well, our bus had sold out two days before, but all of the people who paid for their tickets must be told of the change. Fine, all have been contacted, but now some people have to cancel because the game now clashes with other arrangements/appointments.

Then we had to sell the remaining seats. Finally it was done, but only on the day of the bus travelling. After that, all is finally organised, everyone has paid or been refunded for cancelling, but you get to Edensor Park and it is as hot as hell. Standing on a concrete terrace in the middle of the afternoon on a hot summers day is no fun. They players were similiarly affected, as the match was no brilliant display of football.

Now can you understand how hard it is to deal with late changes of matches? If not, try this.

You are a highly motivated and committed Northern Spirit fan who wants to see either of our two Youth League teams play a match. Now we all know that due to the cricket pitches at North Sydney Oval, we cannot have the Youth League play before our seniors. So where do they play? Well this is a week to week basis as the grounds continually change from one to another, and there is always vagarities about kick off times aswell. It is no fun travelling out to Mosman, Christie Park or Cromer Heights to see nothing! And why cannot this be published in the "Official Match Day Program"? Why isn't this information on our clubs web site?

OK, so now we are getting there, but as Mr Shaw of the Demtel advertisements would say, there's more!

You have a brilliant idea to start up a fanzine, because your clubs program is so bad (it's unbelievable)! Funnily enough, yes you guessed it, printing firms require more than a weeks notice for things like this! Whilst releasing a fanzine is not directly related to match times, my point is about business' not being able to handle a request with little warning.

These are just a few examples of situations we have faced in running the Northern Spirit Supporters Committee this year. My point about them is that you simply cannot run a business these days without having some strategic planning in all area's of operation. It is nigh on impossible to organise something with less than a weeks notice.

Thankfully we have had more than three weeks notice about the change in day and time for the Carlton match at North Sydney Oval, but the situation we faced with the Edensor Park trip was completely out of order. The thinking behind that move was also weird. Anyone with any sort of intelligence will tell you that people who travel to see a game between Northern Spirit and Sydney United will be completely uninterested in a Marconi game nearby soon after our game was finished. Well I can tell you now that this writer is only interested in seeing Marconi play one team - Northern Spirit. (And we all know what that game was like!!!!)

So how do we deal with this? Well here's a suggestion. Look at the Australian Football League. They release the draw to their next season in early November each year. That is four whole months before the first match. On each draw, all details like venue and time for kick off are all predetermined. If any of these details are changed, it is done with ample time, and advertisments are placed in the daily metropolitan newspapers of the affected clubs, (sometimes these changes occur for games between two clubs from different states).

Our league will be able to do this as well. The only trouble I see with it is the situation we face with live television games, but then again, these could all be predetermined as well.

The sooner something is done about this, the better. Soccer Australia will find that more people will travel to away games if they have alot more information about it. The same goes for the Youth League teams for Northern Spirit. If these games were advertised in anyway, such as putting it in the program, more people will attend.

This can only be a way to move the great game of football forward in this country, and all it takes is a few organisational skills.



# Floyd on Football

Firstly, I'd like to say a big thankyou to the club for giving the fans of football the chance to support a team in Sydney, and feel a part of it, no matter what your background. When you cast an eye around North Sydney Oval on a Friday night, it's astonishing to see hard core football fans, suits from North Sydney and families all combining so well. This has to be good for Soccer Australia and for the profile of the sport in general.

My main point for writing this article though is to put across my perspective, being of English origin, and why the Spirit is a revolution, and why it will change the football in Australia for ever. I as most people from the UK went to my first game as a six year old & stood in the terraces. I was totally hooked in my first game. The buzz in the ground, the singing, the anticipation, the expectation and emotions that you experience during a game at that age will stay with you for the rest of your life. Once hooked, you're a life long slave to your team. Whether they win or lose, you can never change teams. Believe me, being a West Bromwich Albion fan is not easy, but still you love them all the same. The point I'm trying to get across here, is that for the first time in Sydney, the kids are going to be brought up with a love and passion for their team, and without ethnic ties or allegiances to any culture. All people are welcome and everyone can experience how it feels to be part of an electric atmosphere in a vibrant crowd. This is Football culture and you will not find this type of experience in the other codes.

Standing in the Bob stand during this season has been an education for all. During the first game we had two songs and although we were noisy, we had a long way to go. By the third game we had about two bays standing and

joining in. During the last two home games against Marconi and Perth, new songs were being sung throughout the games, and at one point the whole Bob stand was standing, and this wasn't just a bunch of English football fans. The crowd is full of Spirit tops and the majority of fans were Australian. The Spirit has achieved something that hasn't happened previously in Sydney. Football culture is here!

Leading on from this, as an Englishman, and growing up as a mad football fan, the only thing that Australia didn't offer that was readily available in the UK, was good live football. It was amazing the amount of people who used to say 'I love it here, but I don't half miss the football'. The Spirit has changed that, and if you wonder why so many people of European origin want to go to see the Spirit, then the reason is simply that it is the one thing about life in Australia that they missed most. Not to say that this is where the Spirit's allegiances lie as that is as far from the truth as you can get. This has clearly been labelled a team for all.

One of my main aims, along with the likes of Tancred, John and Adrian was to encourage good vocal support. I am in the process of producing a song book, initially targeting the Bob Stand, so that all can join in. Below are a few core songs that all should know, and should be able to join in with. If you get to this point of the article, then I thank you for reading my bit & I look forward to seeing you all at the finals.

Cheers

Julian Floyd

# Catharsis: Olympic 2 Spirit 3

What a difference a year makes! Returning to Belmore Oval to watch Olympic play, same old faces, same small crowd, same introspection. The location was no matter, it could have been Leichhardt Oval, the SFS, Lambert Park or in the distant memories, Pratten Park. It was the same old deal. But this time it was different. This time I was a Spirit fan, attending my first away game.

For more than 15 years I had tried to love Olympic, attending a small number of games each season, often enjoying the games (to this day they have a good team), but in the end getting nothing back. Perhaps it was the old Greeks that can only boo in a high pitched voice as they thrust their hands out. Perhaps it was the peanut man that also sold inexplicable videos, perhaps the foreign language chanting by 17 year olds, the over made-up babes, the lembas, the Greek announcements that had Dad screaming in fury to an incredulous ground announcer up in the tower.

But ultimately, it was the fact that nobody cared if we went or not; except for Andrew, their mad number 1 fan who is one of the few that can marry fanatic support for Olympic and for the Socceroos in Bay 23. "You've changed you colours!" he yelled at me when I arrived in the Spirit jersey. Nobody else, from the rich fish mongers that own the club down to the peanut man actually care if anyone else comes along, nor is marketing a word they embrace or understand.

Thus it was that I returned to the "real" NSL, the only one I had known and sadly for many of the population, the only one they know. You see, going to North Sydney Oval hasn't really been the NSL; it's a whole new thing, so divorced from the past that it's unrecognisable. Sure the opposition are teams in the NSL but hey, no peanut man.

The game then, and everything with it finally severed me from the past. Olympic, still with a team that 15,000 should be watching every week, held out (just) by a gutsy Spirit effort. On the terraces, the fans held firm as the Olympic hoods approached; luckily no riot ensued. Their depressed diehards filed out early as they always do.

At the end of it all, I saw Andrew again, he was devastated as he always is after an Olympic loss. We shook hands and exchanged pleasantries. I turned and left the ground hoping/knowing I'd never have to go back to all that nonsense again just to get a football fix. The way forward never seemed clearer.

Mark Bowman



## INTERVIEW WITH PAUL HENDERSON

Following Northern Spirit's 4-0 victory over Marconi Fairfield Adrian asked Spirits keeper a few questions.

**Well obviously Hendo, after a 4-0 victory you must be pleased?**

PH: Yes, it's good to see that we're scoring some goals finally! It's a bit of a surprise against Marconi, I thought that they would be a fair bit tougher, but yes we're thrilled.

**How do you think your form has been this season?**

PH: I guess my form has been consistent, I just want to maintain that for the rest of the season.

**And the teams form?**

PH: We seem to play well for about 75-80 minutes of the game, but there's a little period in the game where we just seem to die, and other teams take advantage of it.

**How have you found the step up from State League with Sutherland to the NSL with Northern Spirit?**

PH: It's a big step, I've been training full time, the guys here are fantastic, and the crowd is just unbelievable. We would be lucky to get 50-100 people to a game with Sutherland, and you only need to look at the crowds here to realise the difference. Are you surprised to find that, halfway through the season, you're the only player to have played every game?

PH: Yes, I'm very surprised. I wasn't expecting to be in the first team line-up, with John Perosh and Peter Blazencic here, so I'm extremely surprised.

**You must be looking forward now to the game against Perth?**

PH: Yes, hopefully that we can match their crowds, and also better their results. I believe we had 17,500 today, so we are getting close to them. Do you think that now we can press on and make the final six?

PH: I think that if we stay consistent and take it one game at a time then it will we can definitely be in a position to challenge for it.

**Will we win the Sydney cup? We're off to a pretty good start?**

PH: I don't know about that. Only results will tell and hopefully we can continue to get them.

**Mark Goldberg and others were out here recently, did they do any work with the players or was it purely the business side of things?**

PH: We saw Mark once or twice, and he had a training session with us, and that's when he injured his ankle, and that was rather funny.

**What parts of your game do you think that you need to improve most?**

PH: I have to work more on my confidence and my talking, but that should just come with time. We've got Steve Watson here, and he's worked with goalkeepers like Mark Bosnich and Mark Schwarzer, so that just shows what a good coach he is, and he's helping me out a great deal. I'm learning all the time.

**What is it like playing with guys of the quality of Robbie Slater and Ian Crook?**

PH: It's a dream. The places that those guys have been, playing overseas, you learn a lot, and it's just great. They've got a lot of experience, and hopefully it will rub off on us.

**Is that one day an ambition of yours, to go over and play in Europe?**

PH: I think that's every players dream in Australia, to go and play overseas one day, and I'm no different, but I don't want to go for a while, I'm happy playing the game here in Australia, and I'd like to get to the level where I'm playing really well here and then make the step over.

**What do you think is the direction that Australian football should be heading in? Should we getting involved in something like an Asian cup competition?**

PH: Gradually, yes. We only play against countries from Asia when we play qualifiers, and I think perhaps that we should have a competition against them when the World Cup's not on.

**Who were your heroes when you were growing up?**

PH: Mark Bosnich, I guess he's every goalkeepers' hero. I'd say Robbie Slater and Graham Arnold. What they've done for Australian football is outstanding, so you have to look up to guys like that. Plus, they're my captain and coach.

Thanks for your time Hendo.

## INTERVIEW WITH FRANCIS AWARITEFE

After losing 4-0 to Northern Spirit Adrian meet up with Francis Awaritefe and asked him a few questions.

**How does it feel to lose 4-0?**

FA: Obviously not crash hot, but there is always the return

**Could you sum up Marconi's season so far?**

FA: We made a pretty good start, and I think that we were fairly consistent at the beginning of the season, but in the last few games we've struggled a bit, and we haven't maintained that consistency, and I suppose that we way that we played today is indicative of our last three or four games. We have to try and put this form behind us and get back to the way we were playing earlier in the season.

**What is the general mood within your squad? Did you have fairly high hopes of challenging for the title this year?**

FA: Yes, I'm pretty sure that we're going to be there or thereabouts, as I said we're not playing that well, but you've got to remain positive and I'm sure that with the players and personnel that we've got we'll be able to bounce back

**Did Marconi have any special preparation before coming here? Playing before a crowd of 17,000 must be a new experience for many of the players there?**

FA: Not really, we've played in front of bigger crowds in Perth and when we've played finals games, so we didn't do anything special really. We just viewed it as another league game, the only difference was we had a couple of days less to recover, having played last Sunday in Adelaide, so obviously the training this week has been a bit all over the place because we were playing here on a Friday. But apart from that it's been a normal build-up really.

**We also hear that you're a bit of a regular at NSO on a Friday night when you're not playing, so you must enjoy it a bit?**

FA: Yes, I like to come out and watch a game, and NSO is a great place to watch football. I really admire what the people who run Northern Spirit have done here, so yes, it's a great place to come on a Friday night and watch a game of football.

Thanks for your time.

### STOP PRESS

**Are the Spirit the First team to be featured on the Tv show "Football Mundial"? Last week this show that focuses on different aspects of the game around the world chose to feature the North Spirit. Spirit Army member Evan Metcalf caught the show in London and was very impressed. Spirit were given 20 minutes of the one hour show and the focus was on our large crowds, as well as an interview with Phil Moss at the beach. It also came up in Soccer Australias weekly update on Aussies playing overseas. Olyroo Mark Robertson returned to Burnley in the English 2nd Div following his two week's in Australia with the Olyroos and his team mates (who know Robbie and Ian Crook) wanted to know all about the Northern Spirit. Interestingly Burnley average crowds of 10,000 so our crowd numbers impressed them..**

Thanks to Evan Metcalf and Rozanna Bozabalain for this information.



## SPIRIT SUPPORTERS CLUB AWAY TRIPS!

So far in the brief existence of the Northern Spirit FC, we, the loyal and vocal supporters have already undertaken two away trips this season.

We firstly braved the wild west for a visit to Edensor Park (Sydney United's home ground, and definitely a place where Angel's fear to tread). Our second trip not so long afterwards was to Canberra on a bright and sunny Monday evening.

Our first visit to Edensor park was by no means a welcome visit. It should be our last trip there considering their current financial situation, and I for one won't lose any sleep over that! The first thing you can see upon arrival is Croatian flags. Everywhere! King Toms Social Club at the front looks like it would be more at home in Zagreb, but alas is a venue for NSL matches.

We settled in at the concrete end for the first half, constantly made noise to the chagrin of the locals, and our presence was expected as a sign up the other end protested that Graham Arnold and Robbie Slater were "Judas" to the Edensor Mob. Nice compliment! We also drank them out of beer by half time! Maybe the United Fans can't handle their grog?

Well, they scored, and the scoreboard attendants accidentally gave us the goal and not them. Something that we made the entire place aware of in 2.3 nanoseconds! Half time hit, and somebody got the walkies, so we went up the other end. Not something we should have done considering the bottles and flares being pelted at us during the game. Even the presence of one Remo Nogarotto couldn't stop 'em! Ah well, we lost one nil, we got back on the bus in one piece, and made it home safely.

As I pointed out the everyone on the bus whilst we were leaving the Edensor Park city limits "Ladies and Gentlemen, you are now leaving Croatia". It must have been, because in the next suburb there was a social/soccer club for the Serbs! I wonder where the Bosnian one is?

Our next trip was Canberra, and this one was a hell of a lot more friendlier. For starters, we actually had organised with the Canberra people (thanks Nick G - you are the best!) to meet our bus at the Stade de Bruce gates. Nick led us through the gates and led us to the promised land. Well, behind the goals anyway!

The first half was very boring apart from the fact that we entertained the crowd with our collection of songs. The Spirit supporters also introduced themselves to the Canberra cheer girls, who incidentally, walk to a very good beat! Left, right, left, right....

We again decided to swap ends at half time, but there were no hordes of hooligans waiting to meet us at the other end. Just a four year old with an attitude problem!

If it wasn't for the accidental hand ball by a Cosmos player in the box, Paul Bilokapic wouldn't have got his penalty for our only goal of the match. Thankfully, we weren't going to be the "patsy" team to give Canberra their first points for season 1998-99.

Seeing as the Cosmos people in their infinite wisdom chose to have this game on a Monday night, we only managed to get 35 people on the bus down, and we had to leave straight afterwards to get back to Sydney at a reasonable hour. I think it was about 1am the next morning before we got back to North Sydney Oval, but it was worth it. "3 points and a hangover!!!"

Also, it was on the way home that the "Shagwell Army" thing got started. Some wonderful person brought with them a tape of a movie called "I.D.". This movie was played on the way home and it was basically all about a police undercover operation in the UK, where they pretended to be football fans at a fictional club called "Shagwell". Pls correct me if I'm wrong!

Well, we all know that coppers stand out like dogs balls next to a football fan, but the movie was great, the lead character lost it totally, and we all went to sleep for the remaining time on the bus.

Overall, our two trips went particularly well, and we look forward to our next local bus trip, which will be Wollongong on the 28/2. The other trips will be:

Newcastle Breakers on the 16/4 and Marconi-Fairfield on the 25/4

Look forward to seeing you all at our future away games!

### POST SCRIPT

CONTACT JOHN MCCORMACK ON 0412178666 OR  
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FOR ANY QUESTIONS OR BOOKINGS

## An Interview With Remo

**What were your expectations for the club both on and off the field this year?**

RN: On the field I thought if we could get into the top six we would have done well and off the field if we could cobble together an average of 5,000 people at every home game and all the budgets were predicated on 5,000 people through the gate I thought that would satisfy the budge we put together and for football standards 5,000 was still a reasonable crowd.

**In the coming years what areas do you envisage Spirit will have to work at to not only entrench themselves not only at the top of football in this country but also at the top of Sport in Sydney?**

RN: Because our level of success off the field has been as quick as it has been I think we are still waiting for all the dust to settle before we plan our next step, fortunately Mark Goldberg and the Palace people here for the last week and we have spent three of the best days I have ever spent trying to understand what exactly constitutes a successful football club, I mean Palace have been around since 1905 so there's 94 years of corporate history there. My view is if we can build on the successes of this year, looking at average crowds hopefully over the next couple of years of 15,000-20,000 solid, week in week out and try to entrench the brand name of Northern Spirit in the sporting market, Sydney and Australia have been crying out for a Northern Spirit/Perth Glory revolution now for 15-20 years and it's contestable that if Perth Glory hadn't come along, I don't know whether I would have had the ticker to do this but when I left Marconi I thought football was doomed in this country, then Perth Glory came along and you think maybe, just maybe this might work. A few things happened that installed confidence, such as when Terry Venables was appointment to this country I received a phone call at 3am from an uncle in Italy asking me weather this was Venables brother that had been appointed to coach Australia, he could not believe it was the Terry Venables. This fact that at international level Australia is growing in prominence you just know the game is ready to explode and I owe most of what we have done here to Nick Tana at Perth Glory. If someone in 1993 when I was chairman at Marconi had told me a Perth team would enter the National league and within three years would be averaging crowds 16,000-18,000 I would have said bullshit. Rupert Murdoch went to Perth and threw \$20 million at Rugby League and it didn't work but Nick Tana took the idea to the fans, the fans responded and it worked. The other thing no one should ever forget is this is the sexiest sporting product in the world. You travel to the UK, Europe and the Americas and there is no other sport that gets near football. The problem with Australia is that we have been manifestly superb at stuffing it up. We have taken the best sporting product in the world and stuffed it for a variety of reasons so all we have done at Spirit is plagiarised the formula that applies everywhere in the world and the people have come out.

**What are you views on the Administration of football across the country?**

RN: If I was marking their report card I would probably give them a C minus. You have to look at the people who are making the decisions in the game and at the end of the day its the clubs and the people who control the clubs and the sort of culture that drives those clubs. I don't want to sound like an apologist for Soccer Australia but I used to think that the Hill approach, that is change it from the top down was the best approach but the reality is best way of change is from the bottom up. Getting clubs to start the change from below so I don't think Soccer Australia have done a great job but I also think many of the clubs are to blame.

**Do you think that the clubs attitude and their votes are influenced by their ethnic base?**

RN: Football is a political cauldron in this country and there are people of very very very ordi-



nary ability who have risen to stations of prominence in this game that in no other game would have been allowed to and when you are a person of ordinary ability what you tend to do is not allow your game to grow because if it grows different people get involved and if the calibre of people who enter the game is such that you can't compete with them you don't like it. I say to clubs who deny they are mono ethnic, many of those clubs have directors who are very successful businesspeople and I say to them if you were a successful car dealer would you only sell cars to Greeks or Italians or Croatians? Of course they wouldn't so adopting a monoethnic approach to your marketing is a recipe doomed right from the outset.

**What's the feedback from Soccer Australia to what Spirit have achieved both on and off the field?**

RN: They're ecstatic. We are providing the impetus for change that they need and that in fairness they can't drive from an administrative level, either because they don't have the courage to or because people who occupy positions of power with in SA won't allow them to so at the end of the day the success of the Perth Glory and Northern Spirit makes the case for change in this game compelling and unambiguous. I'm not particularly interested in what some of the dinosaurs have got to say about this game anymore because the evidence is there Perth Glory have proven it and in arguably the toughest sporting market in Australia - Sydney we've proven it.

**There are many problems with our matchday program and many fans are unhappy with it. This is reflected in the poor sales figures yet other clubs with far less money can produce and far better program than Spirit. What are your thoughts on our program?**

RN: I'd like to improve it but finances drive a lot of things in life and the reality is at every home match we incur a significant loss on every home match program. There are shareholders who ask the obvious question of why are we losing that sum of money over programs. Sales on a per capita basis are low and its a moot point over where there is a culture to buy programs in Australia and that's questionable...

**But Perth Glory can sell 8,000 at home games**

RN: ...I know but the question remains whether if we improve the quality do you improve the opportunity to achieve better sales so it is an area we need to improve on but we'll get there.

**Why do you feel Perth Glory and Northern Spirit achieve the crowds numbers they do while at the same time clubs like Brisbane and Carlton who have had success still struggle to attract crowds?**

RN: I don't know the answer to that. I really need to have a look at their marketing plans and their business plans but I will say this about Carlton, anyone who understands the tribal nature of AFL in Victoria would understand that a Collingwood AFL supporter would never support Carlton. AFL is tribal in Victoria so by calling themselves Carlton they went out to appeal simply to the Carlton AFL base now anyone who right from the outset actually restricts the size of their market in that sort of manner is going to have problems and I think the decision to call themselves Carlton, with the benefit of hindsight was the wrong decision. With respect to Brisbane I think they have a lot to answer for in this country. They drew 48,000 people to a Grand Final that they won two years ago and that should have set the foundation last year for a wonderful surge in support for football in that town and it didn't. I think the directors and management of that club probably have a bit to answer for.

**At North Sydney Oval, Northern Spirit face many problems including the cricket pitch, need-**

**ing extra lights and the lack of facilities to name some, what are the future plans for our home ground?**

RN: Well late this afternoon we had a meeting between ourselves, the Council and the Federal minister for sport - Jackie Kelly to look at what opportunities exist for the redevelopment of the ground. There's no doubt that while this ground is architecturally wonderful from a users perspective its less that a superior sporting facility and unless the Council and Federal and State Governments provide some assistance for the upgrading of this facility well then we are going to have to serious look at alternatives. The reality is that while the demand from the corporate sector for the Northern Spirit is reasonably high we cant accommodate that demand, at the moment corporate facilities inside the ground are average by other sporting facilities standards and I have to say the facilities for the fans, when you are watching queues of 20 -30 meters just to get a beer are just not acceptable, not in 1999.

**Are alternatives being considered?**

RN: In reality there is only one other alternate and that's Brookvale oval...

**So the Sydney Football Stadium is not under consideration?**

RN: No, I'm not discounting the Football Stadium but that's a facility of 45,000 people. If we were to remain in Northern Sydney, Brookvale is the only option but I have some doubts wether relocating that far down the peninsular is actually is smart thing. There are not a lot of options, Sydney's not a city with a lot of Sporting options in this area. Our preferred option is to try and negotiate an outcome with the Council and the Federal Government that would secure some capital grants for the redevelopment of the ground. The redevelopment of the ground involves the construction of a stand on the hill and the addition of another floor on the O'Reilly stand which will increase the seating capacity by another 6,000-7,000. That would make it a sporting facility of around 25,000. There is a 5 year plan that sees this club averaging gates of 20,000 but that was predicated on my assumption that we would have a gate of 5,000 in year one. I'm not sure just how big this club can be.

Other factors to be considered include that we are the single biggest tenant at this ground and we are required at our cost to remove cricket pitches and install a football pitch, a cost which is a six figure sum on an annual basis and why are we doing it? To accommodate 6 paying customers to watch district cricket every second 2nd Sunday now if the good folk at North Sydney council can tell me that is a prudent use of an asset of that sort then I'll eat my hat.

**What are your thoughts on the new TV deal?**

RN: Average. I'm a strong advocate of the need to get football onto commercial television so when Soccer Australia announced that channel 7 had secured the rights for coverage of the National League I was a very strong supporter of that decision even though I felt the financial deal David Hill had cut with channel 7 was less than adequate, but I felt that would be compensated by that fact we would be on prime time commercial television. The reality is, as we have found out Channel 7 have contracted that out to the ABC and we are getting average coverage at best. Last week due to the coverage of the hopman cup they programmed the Perth Glory/Carlton game at 10:50pm, we don't have a review program, we don't have a preview program and basically you would have to say on balance that the position today is inferior than what it was a year ago. What we would have liked to do is perhaps negotiate our on pay TV arraignment's but were precluded from doing that as well because of the arrangements SA have with Optus.

**Us aside who do you see playing in the grandfinal and who do you see lifting the trophy?**



RN: I going to be realistic here. I think the best side we have played this year was South Melbourne and I think South Melbourne are still better than just about every other side. If we are not up there I would love to see Perth do it this year. They have been a wonderful advertisement for the game in the country and I think it would do the game in this country no end of good if Perth were to like the trophy but of course hope springs eternal and one never knows.

#### **What are your thoughts on Auckland?**

RN: I am very supportive of the entry of the Auckland Kings for a variety of reasons. I think they will bring a added spice to the game. There is nothing better than an Australian v New Zealand component to any contest and I think from what I hear and from the people who are putting the consortium together I think they will bring real value to the league. They have some great ideas in mind and I have spoken to the head of the consortium and their template for their bid is a hybrid of the Perth Glory and Northern Spirit. They should bring real value to the league and I look forward to a trans-tasman game twice a year from next year.

#### **Concerns of the downfall of the game in NZ?**

RN: I have no idea how well structured they are to be honest but I do feel that the doom and gloom merchants who are worried the Auckland Kings will provide a competitive advantage for the New Zealand national team are overstating the importance of that. I know I am in the minority for supporting the Kings but they will bring a lot more value to the league than some of the existing clubs.

**Northern Spirit have undertaken a well planned and highly succesful marketing campainge this year and the results are visable at every home game. Do you think the other clubs and Soccer Australia are doing enought promotion and doing it in the right areas to promote football in Australia?**

RM: One of the great tragedies of the game in this country is that rather than the other clubs lining up to have a look at what we are doing then tend to throw rocks. The single biggest characteristic of the game in the country is envy and there is one club in particular that I could name but I won't, but they would be best served by spending a week in our office understanding what drives our business plans and we would be quite happy to open our books for other clubs but the sort of myopic attitude of that particular club and the fact that it can't come to terms with the fact that we have entered the league and taken off in the manner in which it has does not allow it to come here and learn and as far as I am concerned the sooner that club falls off the precipice the better.

#### **POSTSCRIPT**

This interview took place after the Newcastle game on January 8. On January 15 the Sydney Morning Herald published an article claiming a move to Brookvale was highly likely for next season and that Spirit would play at least one game at Brookvale this season to gauge crowd reaction. It now seems neither of these events will happen. It was also reported in the same article the actual cost to hire North Sydney Oval is \$33,000 per game. \$8,000 to hire the ground and \$25,000 to pay for the two extra light towers and remove and replace the cricket pitch. I suppose the big question is could Northern Spirit hire the Sydney Football Stadium for less? And if would crowds improve?

Tancred

## **SINGING WITH JULIAN**

In response to call from many at the ground for song words Julian is happy to bring you the following.

#### **Old Favourite.....to Winter Wonderland tune:**

There's only One Northern Spirit  
One Northern Spirit  
Walking along, singing this song  
Walking in a Spirit Wonderland

#### **Scarves above your head song:**

and it's Northern Spirit (Clap, Clap, Clap, Clap)  
Northern Spirit F.C.  
They're by far the greatest team  
the world has ever seen,  
and it's Northern Spirit (Clap, Clap, Clap, Clap)  
repeat.....

#### **Good for lifting Spirits (and telling the opposition who we are):**

We are Spirit  
I say ....We are Spirit  
We are Spirit  
I say ....We are Spirit

#### **To the land of hope & glory tune:**

We all follow the Spirit  
Over land and sea (and Sydney)  
we all follow the Spirit  
Oh to Victory!!!!  
...Repeat

#### **To the ol' lullaby 'you are my sunshine':**

You are my Spirit  
My only Spirit  
You make me happy  
When skies are grey  
You'll never know how  
Much I love you  
so please don't take my spirit away....  
Then go "Na, na, na, nah na" etc etc....!

#### **For free kicks and corners:**

Come on Spirit  
Come on spirit  
Over and over again....!



# The Saga of the Program

The trouble with starting a new venture the size of a National League Football club is getting everything right the first time. Many of the areas that were less than perfect on that first night in October have been improved (where possible) but the match day program still leaves so much to be desired. For those that missed the attempt on October 9 lets just say it was A5 in size, 16 pages, contained only 5 articles and a complete waste of \$2. For the opening night program, when such a big crowd was expected the club should have done far better.

What was the response be the club? Did they fire the muppets responsible? No. They gave them a talking to and let them continue. Issue 2 was a step in the right direction. The size was now the traditional and far mare convenient A5 but instead of the readable black type on white we now have a full colour glossy production. The size increased to 20 pages and the new format for articles was presented: large heading, text double spaced and generally the whole program can be read in ten minutes or less. Issue 2 also marked the appearance of the many errors that plague the program week after week. How many games were our "colours" listed as gold with maroon trim???? Other important items such as the details for our next home game were consigned to the bottom of one page in a small font. Hardly the way to inform the interested public when their team plays next.

By the time issue 4 was released at the Brisbane game the size had been dropped to 16 pages, sales were falling and a new competition was introduced. Every program was to be numbered and a draw was to take place at

halftime. The owner of the winning numbered program was to have won an autographed football. Everyone in the Bob stand was somewhat concerned as all our programs had the same number: 5555. The wining number was 2222.

The following week I had a long tale with Glen Holloway of Holloway Innovations who produce the program. Glen seems to have a very interesting idea of just what constitutes an good quality program and I am left wondering how he possibly got the contract in the first place. After we had chatted for a while I found out that the budget is very limited for our program. When I mentioned perhaps some advertisers could be found Glen said the club had told him they would do this but nothing had ever happened with this. All of the ads in the program at the moment are part of the sponsorship deal he companies have with Spirit.

When I then suggested we could expand the size if printed in Black and White he confidently said Colour or Black and White costs the same to print! (Logically if this were true this fanzine would be in full colour). As to the numbering he was told by his printer it would be very difficult and expensive to give every program a separate number so they gave every program the same number expect the winning copy! The rest of the conversation was along the same lines. Glen kept going on about production standards and I kept pointing out the lack of content.

After our discussion I sent Glen a copy of the Perth Program - by far the best in the country and several improvements for issue 5 were made. At least now we can read a little about our opposition which is very nice

(and taken for granted at most other grounds) The down side is the room for these new features has be made by removing all reference to our Youth and Colts sides as well as the Youth League Table!

Issue 8 (v Glory) marked another step in the right direction. The size was returned to 24 pages and while Arnie's and Robbie's columns have gone, more space was given to allow longer articles and for the first time there was a focus on not one but two players accompanied by quality photos (Crook and Billy). Issue 9 continued the improving trend and we even stopped playing with the maroon trim :). Interestingly from issue 8 the program was now produced by Different Class Concepts who have the same phone number, address and email details as Holloway Innovations.

I guess the question remains what do fans want from a program? Having questioned people at the last few games the answers and surprisingly simple. Fans want information. Who people are and what is going on. Updates on injured players and features with up and coming youth players are other popular ideas. They enjoy contests and reading about the players. Everyone wants a quality publication and for \$2 expects it. Another factor is creating the desire for fans to purchase the program each week. If the content was fulfilling fans would make a point to purchase it each game and thus guarantee a good level of sales. Personally I would also like to see a program that took more than 10 minutes to read. I would love to be able to re-read the program on the train home and find unread articles but at the moment that is a long way off.

Is there a culture to buy programs in Sydney? Both Glen Holloway and Remo question this

but if Glory is used as a guide then the answer is year. Most home games Glory sell between 7,000 - 8,000 programs. This contrasts with Spirit selling between 1,000- 1,500. For \$2 Glory produce the best program in the country. 48 pages, 16 in colour and 19 pages of advertising. Theses something in it for everyone and should be used as an excellent example of just what can be achieved within Australia if a club really wants to have a quality program. Glory even manage to have a unique number inside every program.

I would like to think that the fact that Spirit/Different Class Concepts have produced a full colour glossy program shows their commitment and desire to work at improving the publication. I hope that in the remaining weeks of this season the improvements in content will continue and hopefully by next season Northern Spirit can have the program it deserves. Using quality writers such as Michael Cockerill such also be applauded and should also be continued next season.

A final question should also be raised of why is there a complete lack of information in the program for our Youth and Colts teams? These guys are playing for the Spirit and one day might even play at North Sydney so perhaps we could be informed of their results and see the table each week. Having been to two youth games it is worth the hassle of ringing the club each Friday to find out where they will be playing. The football is entertaining, there are usually a few fans there (perhaps more if these details were in the program) and entry is free. So if you have nothing planned when the games are on (or like some of us plan your life around these games) come to a Youth game, you might just enjoy it. You should also know beer is not sold but you can bring an esky.

Tancred



## WE WERE IN A CUP?

That's right, during January and February the four Sydney Teams all met each other once in the league and to 'spice things up' the Sydney challenge was held. Each team was to have put up \$5,000 for a prize pool of \$20,000 but this prize was called off due to the financial troubles at one club (no prizes guessing which one). Bohemia Crystal also donated a crystal trophy. As these were not real cup games but regular league games special rules for points were used:

- 3 points for a home win
- 4 points for an away win
- 1 point draw

1 bonus for scoring 3 or more goals when winning

On top of this these games also carried the usual league points.

While I am all for trying new ideas, especially for marketing this great game I am left wondering if anything was gained by it. Yes the local derbys were interesting but they would have been regardless of if the cup competition was being held or not. Did any extra fans attend the games due to the Sydney Challenge? I think not but its a shame that Soccer Australia did not run a cup this year. One of the complaints in the past has been that fans did not attend games but with clubs going to this extreme to try and develop new ideas it might be time for SA to consider a cup competition for next season. Also this season the NSW federation chose not to hold the pre season Waratah cup - a competition that in the past featured both NSW NSL and State League teams.

If these cups do not return next season I would hope the Sydney teams would continue with the Sydney Challenge idea and perhaps experiment with mid week games. With only four teams in the competition the cup ties could be either on a home and away basis or even a "group" format in that all 4 teams play a separate cup game home and away to every other team. After all thats only six extra games each season. Another possibility is other Clubs might be interesting in participating. Newcastle, Canberra and Wollongong might all be interested along with some of the NSW super league teams.

The Sydney Challenge table as off 4/2/98

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Spirit  | 9 |
| United  | 8 |
| Olympic | 4 |
| Marconi | 0 |

If Olympic defeat United Spirit win the cup.

If Olympic and United draw Spirit win the cup.

If United beat Olympic United win the cup.

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Spirit v Marconi  | 4-0    |
| Olympic v Spirit  | 2-3    |
| United v Marconi  | 3-2    |
| Spirit v United   | 1-2    |
| Olympic v Marconi | 5-0    |
| Olympic v United  | Feb 14 |

## TPAAH's pub guide

It's a hard job but somebodies got to do it. In an effort to ensure you have as much fun before and after the game as you do at the football we present part 1 of an ongoing series, the Three Points and a Hangover (TPAAH) pub guide.

The North Sydney Hotel (Percys)

Schooner of VB/New: \$3

Food: Yes. On Fridays it starts around 5:30-6pm. A bit pricey but the quality and large serves make up for this.

Location: Corner of Miller St and Carlow St.

Hours: 10am - midnight 7 days

Staggering time to/from ground: It's across the road so at worst 2 minutes.

From the outside the North Sydney Hotel looks like just about every other Australian Federation hotel but once inside it takes on a more North Sydney feel. The front bar, called Percys is nicely layed out with plenty of tables and chairs, 3 pool tables and the large screen TV. The back bar has less seating, but plenty of room to stand. It also has several TV sets hung from the roof. It's nice to see the now mandatory pokie machines have a room to themselves behind the back bar. You can usually find one or two Spirit fans in here by 12pm on Friday matchdays. By 4:30 the bar is starting to fill and by 6:30 it's nicely full but not heaving. The atmosphere after the games can be excellent with the singing continuing and as the pub has a large TV screen on the wall with Optus it can be possible to see the Spirit game replayed at 9 or 9:30.

The pubs on a corner and up till the Newcastle game drinking was allowed on the footpath but thanks to the drunk Newcastle fan on the bin (in front of the Bob stand) the police have cracked down and there have even been reports of fans not being allowed back into the hotel after the game (They looked drunk). Lets hope this improves with time. Another positive is that the management make an effort to have enough bar staff on for match nights. There is nothing worse than a full bar with only one girl behind the bar and this does not happen at Percys. Percys also make an effort to welcome football fans, as opposed to some other North Sydney Hotels. The other lovely feature of Percys is it has Optus (and Foxsports) and a large screen to watch it on so for away games in distant places and Olyroos games on Optus this is the place be. In short, a excellent pub to drink in that works at making their customers feel at home.

And for the girls out there here's Evelyns comments:

Given the job to review 'the female facilities', I probably felt more critical than normal. However, as far as pub toilets go, things weren't all bad. The toilets in the back room, while clean, are certainly not up to standard. Why am I speaking in plural, there was only one, in what appears to be a shoddy extension when they realised women might use the pub too. The paint was chipped and peeling, there was no mirror near the hand basin, only a full length mirror in what has to be one of the darkest corners on the earth.

Fortunately the toilets in the main section (Percys bar) are better. While there was a strong smell of disinfectant this is a good thing and should be encouraged, i'd rather the toilets be too clean than dirty. The decor however suggests they have not been refurbished since the mid 70's, the colour scheme is brown, apricot and green. There were no hand towels, just one dryer, and the mirrors were dark. If you're going to this pub the trick is to bring your own mirror.



## What's happening with the supporters club?

Prior to the start of the Ericsson Cup season of 1998-99, various UK football supporters clubs were invited amongst other Australian football supporters to North Sydney Oval for a meeting with the club about starting a supporters club for the Northern Spirit.

A few names were taken, and thus we have our committee of three still with us today, of which are taking the giant steps of forming a supporters club. Many things have to be done in this situation. Where do you start? Where are our supporters coming from? All questions without answers at that early stage, but the opening home game against Olympic certainly surprised us. Even the eternal optimists!

Since then, many a drop of water has passed under the Harbour Bridge, but we are finally getting somewhere!

We have organised two away bus trips so far, with another two coming in February. Both Bus Trips were a great deal of fun for all on board but weren't complete successes. The Edensor Park trip was first met with a rather difficult kick off time change (damn you Soccer Australia!), and crowd scene's that would seem closer to Zagreb than Sydney. At least we won in Canberra, but the Monday night fixture certainly did keep the Spirit numbers away, and we didn't quite fill the bus.

Nowadays, things are slowly but surely starting to fall into place. A bus trip to

Brisbane has been organised (organised by many Coaches), and now this wonderful little "Zine" that you are currently reading. Also under construction is a supporters club patch commemorating the foundation season of the Northern Spirit FC.

Ultimately, we also have to make the club official, with memberships on offer, and to also give our supporters club an identity! Perth have the Shed Boys, and some of us have seen the BBB in action, but the North Sydney faithful also need a name. Mind you, if you get struck with the greatest idea at four in the morning, enlighten the committee, and we'll do the rest!

Half way through the first season, and our supporters have pretty much turned the Australian Football Community on it's head. Even the high and mighty Les Murray wondered where our support would come from, and now, the media around the country constantly refer to our extremely gregarious supporters during matches. Northern Spirit Supporters - we the committee thank you. Without your help, what has been achieved could not have been done. Now, the fight continues for success, and to maintain our place on Sydney's sporting calendar. At the rate we are going, we will be Sydney's number one supported football club before long! For all codes!

John.

## Are you Les Murray in disguise?

Les Murray, football guru are not? Over the years you would have thought that someone in Les Murrrays position would have been supportive of the Northern Spirit. After all Les loves to remind us football is the word game, played by millions across our planet. Everywhere but Sydney it seems.

"They'll have to woo thousands and thousands of soccer fans who don't exist yet" said Les Murray to the Sun Herald, September 6 1998. Where do we start with this? Surely Les knows how many juniors play football. He must know about those two SBS ratings winners. No not SouthPark but the Coupe du Monde and the English Premier League. I guess Les just does not want to see just how big football can be in this country. It can't be that Les wants Spirit to fail, after all, he lives on the North Shore so Spirit is his team, but then again perhaps not. Next issue we will bring you Les's well thought out arguments on why Australia needs Croatian teams in the league, that is unless he says something ever more interesting between now and then.

Well done to G3, our new sponsors. Not only did they pay \$200,000 to sponsor Spirit for the year but they have come up with perhaps the most cunning way to advertise their produce at Spirit games. G3 are the people handing out those small cards that say on one side "You've just been booked!" (to get out of a mobile phone access fee) and the other side of the card is bright yellow. It's great to see every time an opposition player deserves a yellow card thousands of fans around the ground waving them at the player/ref. Now if G3 would just make some red ones. G3, definitely not Les Murray in disguise.

What can we say about Steve expect please come back! For those that don't know Steve he is the guy who replaced Tim Baily for the Gippsland game and did such an excellent job. Now if we could just get rid of Tim every week ... Clap your hands if you hate Tim Baily. Steve, definitely not Les Murray in disguise.

Les set the scene. Spirit home to Gippsland. 10,000 people are putting up with the sun to watch football. Minutes before kick-off the ABC camera pans across the Bob stand where the singing and dancing is in full swing. The camera lingers for a few seconds and Steve Robilliard quickly starts talking about all the expats having fun in the bob stand! Hello???? Is it that unbelievable that Australians could enjoy singing at the football? Has Steve never been to Bay 23? Did it ever occur to you to get out of the press box and walk the 75 meters to the bob stand to talk to us first? And why did Alan Hunter stay so quiet, after all he has met John, Adrian and myself and we talked about how Australian the Bob Stand was so why did he stay quiet? Steve Rob, are you Les Murray in disguise?

Friday Jan 15, Spirit home to Marconi and Optus are filming a segment on the Bob stand. Thursday Jan 21 after showing the segment in which 6 people are interviewed and one had an English accent Paul Wade's first words after watching it were "Well what about those pommie supporters?" Paul Wade, are you Les Murray in disguise?

"Recent Tabloid features suggest that the singing troubadours that congregate at Spirit Point are predominantly British expatriates, but if the rousing rendition of Advance Australia Fair emanating from the Bob stand, albeit somewhat ahead of the official recital is any indication, the Bob Stand contains a great number of dinky di Aussies." John Vrtaric, Australian and British Soccer Weekly Tue February 2. John Vrtaric, definitely not Les Murray in disguise.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported on December 5 1988 that Tony Labbozzetta (of Marconi) hoped that since our game against Sydney United now kicked off at 3pm we might "stay on the enjoy the match at nearby Marconi stadium and the sumptuous facilities of club Marconi afterwards." Perhaps we now know the real reason United chose a 3pm kickoff giving us just 6 days notice to change our plans. Tony Labbozzetta, are you Les Murray in disguise?

Are there people you think are/are not Les Murray in disguise? We would love to hear from you.

Our contact details are on page 2.



# THIS FANZINE CULTURE

by 'The Appointed One'

A strange title perhaps, but one that has led 'the fanzine' from humble beginnings to what is today, a thriving industry that is, for the most part, totally out of the control of the clubs because they didn't want mere supporters expressing an opinion that may differ from the official line. From the supporters point of view, they wanted a voice to ring out within the mystical black-hole that was the football industry in the UK.

Unlike Northern Spirit, who actively campaigned for a 'Supporters Committee' and actually employ a 'supporters liaison manager', before the team had kicked a ball in anger, the supporters in England, for it is here that fanzines began and rapidly spread throughout Europe and beyond, decided enough was enough with the endless treadmill of pre-season high expectations leading to bouts of deep depression because of a lack of boardroom ambition and the general apathy with which the clubs treated most fans. The other areas needed to create the 'perfect' fanzine were digs at 'bigger' clubs (most often Manchester United), season saving wins over local rivals and a gleeful delight in watching misfortunes unfold upon those rivals (and/or Manchester United!). Perhaps one of the most important aspects to a successful fanzine is the name. It is usually witty, and has some semblance of merit connecting to its respective club without actually using the name (see examples below).

Most of all the fans wanted a voice. When you have poured your heart, and a fair share of your bank account and soul, into a club, you feel passionately about it and feel, rightly or wrongly, that you deserve a say in its affairs. You want information so that you can make informed choices about what's going on. The 'fanzine culture' helped to change all of that in that it provided the very mouthpiece the fans craved. Years of frustration on the terraces finally had an outlet. While fanzines may be disliked by the guardians and bastions of the game (ie: the clubs), it has become increasingly difficult for them to ignore their existence. Indeed, so long as the clubs continue the age-old practice of controlling information and censoring criticism within the confines of the matchday programmes, fanzines have absolute long-term survival guaranteed. Some fanzines work closely with the club, the profits going into improving the publication and the odd bit of matchday sponsorship (balls, players, boots etc.). Others work almost exclusively with clubs and gain insider information, interviews and the like, with the proceeds going to running costs, charity and the clubs. The remainder are purely there to give the fans the necessary outlet to voice their opinions, and then to line the pockets of the editor (ergo: no-one but the editor really gains a thing from it).

There have been a few supporters clubs magazines doing the rounds in England since the 1940s but it was about 1980-81 when the York City 'zine *Terrace Talk*' became the first regular independent English/Welsh fanzine. Since this time, there has been a growth rate which took many by surprise as the subsequent total of titles is now around 1200. At last there was the opportunity for the fans to vent their ire

concerning centre-forwards that had passed their 'sell by' dates, idle players, the price of burgers and pies, ticketing arrangements and costs, the chairman and/or directors, replica kit prices, the amount of replica kits (Manchester United again), other teams and knowing that the age-old fear of having their letters edited beyond all recognition by the establishment was a thing of the past.

During the height of their popularity, there could be anything up to five or more titles being sold outside almost all football league grounds, and many at the lower non-league grounds too. The fans, and certainly the clubs, looked upon the 'zine scene as some sort of underground movement which, in reality, it was. However, football magazines soon realised that fanzines were playing a key-role within the football market and started to publicise their existence (*When Saturday Comes* being a prime example). Most invariably missed the point, concentrating on appearance rather than content, and as such ignored many 'zines' that had actively campaigned against ID cards and blanket introduction of all-seater stadiums. Such was the compelling force that caused people to part with their 'hard earned' to purchase this most unofficial of items, today you will find 'this fanzine culture' has grown to include school teams, Sunday League sides, pub and even 5-a-side teams, and with that sort of pulling power, you can deny them, you can disown them, but you can never ignore the influence of the fans and certainly never underestimate the strength of fanzines.

## Fanzine Titles For Fun

Here we take a very brief look at a mere handful of titles available in the UK without even scratching the surface. It is done purely to demonstrate the sense of humour needed in a publication of this type and the need for something catchy that readily springs into the mind of the fans.

A Kick Up The R's - Queens Park Rangers  
Brian Moore's Head..is uncannily like the London Planetarium - Gillingham  
The Deranged Ferret - Lincoln  
Eh Mind O'Gillie - Dundee  
Can I Bring My Dog? - Dundee United  
The Crooked Spirite - Chesterfield  
Grorty Dick - West Bromwich Albion  
Away From The Numbers - East Fife  
Loadsamoney - Blackburn Rovers  
Mission Impossible - Darlington  
Waiting For The Great Leap Forward - Motherwell  
Rub Of The Greens - Plymouth Argyle  
Sing When We're Fishing - Grimsby Town  
Dial M For Merthyr - Merthyr Town  
What A Load Of Cobblers - Northampton Town  
One F In Fulham - Fulham  
Hoof The Ball Up - Wimbledon  
Winning Isn't Everything - Welling Utd  
Greasy Chip Butty - Sheffield Utd  
The Memoirs Of Seth Bottomly - Port Vale  
Keegan Was Crap Really - Doncaster Rovers  
On Suicide Bridge - Abingdon Town  
Give 'Em Beans - Barrow  
To Eli And Back - Leeds Utd  
'This Fanzine Culture' - silly name, powerful stuff!

Three points and a Hangover (TPAAN) is not the only fanzine available in Australia. For those who are interested the following publications are also available:

**Studs up**, the Oz fans Perspective is four years old and still going strong. As the national fanzine it deals with many issues each month and is available from Kevin Christopher, PO Box 53, Oakleigh South, 3167 Vic. Studsup@ozemail.com.au some material is online at: [www.ozemail.com.au/~studsup/first1.html](http://www.ozemail.com.au/~studsup/first1.html)

Subscriptions cost \$18 for 6 issues. or \$32 for 12 issues.

You can also get a try before you buy deal by sending TWO 95 cent stamps if you want a photocoped back issues (give us your preference) OR THREE 95 cent stamps if you want the latest issue.

**The Farr post** is the Queensland fanzine. It is produced by Tony Moran and is available for only \$2. Send your requests to The Farr Post, PO Box 478 Bulimba, Qld 4171.

**My Blue Heaven**, the Carlton fanzine is available by contacting Sally at My Blue heaven, PO Box 13078, Law Courts, Melbourne 3000 or [mbheaven@hotmail.com](mailto:mbheaven@hotmail.com)

If you are interested in what happens across the Tasman, and I presume this will include what happens with the Auckland ~~Queens~~ sorry..er Kings then send an Australian \$5 note to **Sitter!** - Bruce Holloway, 11 Thames St, Hamilton, NZ.

## On the Internet

For those who are on the net there are two mailing lists that are very worthwhile. To join the Northern Spirit mailing list send a mail to: [listserv@isfa2.com](mailto:listserv@isfa2.com) with the body: **join spirit**

And to join the Ozsoccer list, for discussion of all matters relating to Australian football send a mail to: [majordomo@thehub.com.au](mailto:majordomo@thehub.com.au) with the body: **subscribe ozsoccer-l** (Thats an lower case L not a one)

## Upcoming Northern Spirit games:

H=home A=away

Wed Feb 17 A Sutherland (Youth KO 6:00pm main game KO 7:30pm) (Seymour Shaw Park Miranda)  
Sun Feb 21 A Melbourne Knights (6:00pm kick off)  
Sun Feb 28 A Wollongong Wolves (7:30pm kick off)  
Wed Mar 03 H Adelaide City  
Fri Mar 19 H Canberra Cosmos  
Tue Mar 23 H South Melbourne  
Sun Apr 04 A Gippsland Falcons (6:00pm kick off)  
Fri Apr 09 H Adelaide Sharks  
Fri Apr 16 A Newcastle (8:00pm kick off)<sup>2</sup>  
Sun Apr 25 A Marconi Fairfield (7:00pm kick off)  
Saturday June 12 Australia v FIFA World XI at the opening of the Olympic Stadium.

<sup>2</sup>Please note the away game at Newcastle may be moved to Sunday to become the ABC match of the day (now if only Martin Tyler could do the commentary...).

You can also see a full list of upcoming games by looking at: [spirit.webcity.com.au/rep98-99/98-99.htm](http://spirit.webcity.com.au/rep98-99/98-99.htm)